

myweeklymarketing.

Janice Hostager: 0:05

I'm Janice Hostager. After three decades in the marketing business and many years of being an entrepreneur, I've learned a thing or two about marketing. Join me as we talk about marketing, small business and life in between. Welcome to my Weekly Marketing.

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Hey friend, welcome back to my Weekly Marketing. Okay, so let me ask you something. Do you ever feel like you're working so hard in your marketing, like you're posting on Instagram and sending emails, maybe even trying some ads, but your results still feel unpredictable? Like one month you hit a client, the next month crickets. If that's you, here's what I want you to know. It's probably not that you're doing something wrong or that you're bad at marketing. The issue is that there are hidden gaps in your marketing system and those gaps leak momentum, they leak leads, and they leak revenue. So today we're going to uncover those hidden gaps and talk about exactly how to close them. By the end of this episode, you'll know what's holding your marketing back and the simple steps you can take to finally start seeing consistent results. I'll also let you in on a way to discover what your gaps are and how to close them. So stick around to the end, because you're going to walk away with clarity on where you're stuck and how to move forward.

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Okay, so let's start with the big question. Why do marketing gaps even happen? The first reason - overwhelm. There are millions of tactics being thrown at you. I totally get it. Reels, funnels, TikTok, AI, ads, and you feel like you need to do all of them. But when you try to do everything, nothing really connects. It becomes less of a system and more just kind of throwing spaghetti at the wall to see what sticks. When there's no strategy, it becomes a random acts of marketing.

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The second thing I think that happens it certainly happens to me is our blind spots. Most business owners are naturally strong in one area. Maybe you're amazing at building awareness with social media, but you don't have a system for actually converting that attention to customers. Or maybe you're great at making sales calls but you're not bringing in new people to talk to. When one area is weak, it creates a hidden gap, and I get it. We all gravitate to what we're good at and avoid the things we're not.

Nobody is blaming you for that, but being aware of what those things are can make a big difference in your business.

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And the third reason why marketing gaps happen is what I call the "busy but broke syndrome. You're hustling, you're posting, you're signing up for challenges and doing all the things, but because there's no system, you're mistaking activity for momentum. It's where you're busy all the time but not actually doing the things that move the needle, and that just requires some self-awareness and a clear path of action every week. It's easy to slip into this - it happens to me all the time. But when you catch yourself spending an entire morning, like I did today, trying to understand why ManyChat wasn't working instead of just contacting support, it's time to redirect yourself. Marketing gaps are like this. Imagine you're carrying a bucket of water up a hill, but that bucket has holes in it. No matter how hard you work, the water leaks out before you reach the top. That's what hidden marketing gaps do. They drain your effort and exhaust you way before you get results. Okay, so that's why gaps happen. But now let's talk about three of the most common types of hidden gaps I see over and over again.

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Gap number one is the Awareness gap. This is when not enough people know you exist. Maybe you're relying on referrals or posting when you remember. Without new people entering your world, your pipeline dries up. There's a lot of noise out there, a full inbox. Social media is like a zoo, right? It's really hard to stand out, and because there's so much going on all the time, we try to be in all the places, and that's, honestly, just a recipe for disaster. A quick fix is choosing one awareness strategy. Maybe consistent Instagram posts or podcast guesting - something that falls into the awareness phase and then commit to it. There are a lot of ways to drive awareness. If you serve a pain point that people turn to Google for, maybe it's focusing on your search engine optimization, or maybe even Google ads, or maybe it's getting on podcasts or getting in publications. Whatever it is, go all in on one thing at a time. That'll give you traction and that will build your confidence for moving forward too.

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Gap number two is the Conversion gap. This is when people see you, maybe even follow you, but they don't take the next step. They're curious, but they don't convert. Usually, this means you don't have a clear freebie - also called a lead magnet, or an email nurture sequence in place that solves a problem for your customer. Truthfully, people are inundated with freebies and especially with AI, you need to give something of value

away, and there's so much information right now. People are drowning in information. So your freebie could be a lot of different things, depending on your industry. It could be a mini training, a planner, a contest, a toolkit or a challenge. Those things convert a little better than just, maybe, a free download these days. But whatever it is, share your best stuff. That's how you stand out and get noticed. Then you have them on your email list.

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Even today, email is still the most cost-effective way to convert subscribers to buyers. As they say and have said for years, the money is in the list. And you don't need a thousand lead magnets, just one that leads to your offer, that pre-qualifies them to be interested in what you're selling. Don't give them anything, lead them down the trail. If you're running a contest that is giving away, say, a free MacBook Pro, but you are a health coach, you're probably not going to get the people that are interested in your product or service to be on your list. You're just going to get a lot of unqualified entrants. So make sure that whatever you give them leads to what you're selling. So create one irresistible lead magnet that leads to your offer and set up a simple three or four email nurture sequence to follow it up. Okay, gap number three, what I call the retention gap. You get customers, but they're one and done. No repeat sales, no referrals. That's because you don't have a system for follow-ups, upsells or turning happy customers into promoters.

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Most e-commerce businesses see 15 to 30% of their customers come back for another purchase, and a healthy repurchase rate is 20 to 40%, depending on your industry, product type. So that should make you stand out and say, "wow, maybe I should be paying attention to the people that have already bought from me. So there are a few factors that push the repeat sales rate higher. One could be a subscription model, could be a loyalty program or perks for repeat buyers. Making sure that you're reliable and have good customer support and do things quickly, that can make a difference. And strong post-purchase marketing, such as emails and follow-ups and reminders. Those will all help push that repeat sales rate higher.

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Things that pull it lower would be one-off services and products, poor customer experience or high friction, so that means that it's difficult to buy. Like the checkout process is cumbersome or you make him go through a meeting first or something like that, so those things can actually pull your repeat sale rate down. And then also weak communication after your first sale. Make sure that you have an offer ladder where your

customer can go after your initial offer. So an offer ladder would be something that starts out low, low price point for people that are just coming into your program or your process, and then the next step would be something a little more advanced. And then the third step would be something even beyond that. So if you have a coaching program, that could lead to a mastermind, if you have a photography service, you could offer a different type of sitting than the one they bought and then follow up with them and stay in touch and add follow-up emails after a project ends or create a referral bonus. That's another good way of helping those people become your champions. Simple shifts that keep momentum going are powerful. So these three gaps - awareness, conversion, retention are the biggest culprit behind inconsistent results and inconsistent sales.

Janice Hostager: 9:06

Okay, so I've created something that I call the Ultimate Gap Finder. I call it the Trail to the Sale Framework. Think of it like a hiking trail. Without a map, you're just wandering through the woods, taking random turns, hoping you end up at the right destination. But with a trail map, every step is clear. You know where you're going and you know how to get there.

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The Trail has eight stages. Awareness, which we just talked about. Consider, where I like to move people to my email list so that I can send out nurture sequences from there. Compare, which is where you show people how you're different from the competition - how you're better than the competition. The Evaluation stage, which isn't for all products or services, but it gives out people an opportunity to try you out. Maybe that's a conversion event like a webinar or a free trial, a freemium trial, something along those lines. Sell, which is where we look at pricing and addressing objections. Supersize, where you can get them to move up, or maybe buy a suggestion sale item. Serve, which is after the sale - how well you serve them and how well you take care of the people that have already bought. And then Send, which is where I ask people to share with others and give me an evaluation and refer. So this is why this matters.

Janice Hostager: 10:28

If one stage is missing, the whole trail breaks down. So if you're missing Awareness, nobody knows you exist. If you're missing Consider, people know about you, but don't take the next step. If you're missing Evaluate, people look at you and your competitor, and they choose competitor because they haven't tried it out yet. If you're missing Serve, you sell once, but your clients won't come back because you're not serving them. See how each stage builds on the last.

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So let me give you a story. One of my clients was doing all the things - running webinars, podcasting, even running ads. But when we mapped her efforts onto the Trail to the Sale, guess what? She had awareness and a good offer, but she had no consider stage, she wasn't capturing emails and she wasn't nurturing people through her email service. Once we plugged in a strong lead magnet and a nurture sequence, suddenly things started working for her. Same effort, different result, because now it was connected.

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So how do you figure out where your hidden gaps are? First of all, Diagnose. Pay attention to where people are dropping off. Are you struggling to attract new people? Are they signing up but not buying? Are they buying once but disappearing?

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Step two, Simplify. Focus on closing one gap at a time. Don't try and fix everything all at once. Pick the weakest link and strengthen it. And step three, Systematize. Once something's working, make it repeatable. Use templates, automations and processes so you don't have to reinvent the wheel every week.

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Here are three quick actions that you can take this week. First of all, audit your customer journey. Write down how somebody goes from finding you to buying from you. Do people fall off? Where do they fall off? Take a look at that. Next, create or refine one clear lead magnet that connects to your offer. It just takes one, but it needs to be really good and it needs to be really strong. And then finally, send a follow-up email to one past customer and thank them for being a customer, and invite them back or ask for a referral. Small shifts like that can be huge. Okay, so now you're listening and thinking, "Okay, I see the gaps, but I don't know how to put all the pieces together." That's exactly why I built a course called Modern Marketing Mastery. Inside the course, I walk you through step-by-step through the Trail to the Sale so that you can stop guessing and stop doing random acts of marketing and finally have a strategy that works. You can join the waitlist at janicehostager.com/modernmarketingmastery. I'll also put the link in the show notes. But if you're first wondering how to figure out where your marketing gaps are, you can start with my free marketing clarity quiz. It'll help you see which gap is costing you the most right now and I give you the exact steps you need to close that gap in your business. You can find the marketing clarity quiz at janicehostager.com/quiz and again, I'll put the link in the show notes.

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So I just want to encourage you. You're not broken. Your business is not broken. You just have gaps, and gaps can be closed, and I want to commend you for taking messy effort, because that's how we figure out where our gaps are and that's how we move forward. So this week, pick one small action to start closing your hidden gaps. Take the free quiz to find your focus. And remember, momentum comes with consistency, one clear step at a time. Thanks so much for joining me today. For more information about anything we talked about, visit myweeklymarketing.com/126. See you next time. Bye for now.